

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-7 (canceled)

8. **(New)** In a distal tip for the positioning of an artificial joint stem that is mounted on a cementless artificial joint at a position near the distal end of the stem thereof, the distal tip guiding the distal end portion of the stem so as not to make direct contact with the inner surface of a bone canal when the artificial joint stem is inserted into the bone canal while achieving stable positioning of the distal end portion of the stem in the bone canal when the insertion is completed, the improvement wherein said distal tip is made of a biodegradable and absorbable material.

9. **(New)** The distal tip for positioning an artificial joint stem according to claim 8, wherein the distal tip has a diameter, in horizontal section, which is larger than the diameter of the horizontal section of the stem at a position near the distal end of the stem, and wherein the distal tip comprises mounting means such as a fitting hole, a fitting protrusion, a screw or the like that fits with the stem.

10. **(New)** The distal tip for positioning an artificial joint stem according to claim 9, wherein the mounting means of the distal tip is a fitting hole, a fitting protrusion or a

screw provided on the distal tip at a position that is offset from the center axis of the distal tip.

11. **(New)** The distal tip for positioning an artificial joint stem according to claim 9, wherein the mounting means of the distal tip is a fitting hole which has a projection or a ridge that protrudes from the inner circumferential surface toward the center of the fitting hole.

12. **(New)** The distal tip for positioning an artificial joint stem according to claim 10, wherein the mounting means of the distal tip is a fitting hole which has a projection or a ridge that protrudes from the inner circumferential surface toward the center of the fitting hole.

13. **(New)** The distal tip for the positioning of artificial joint stem according to claim 8, wherein the distal tip has an outer circumference in the shape of a polygon or other uneven shape other than a circle.

14. **(New)** The distal tip for the positioning of artificial joint stem according to claim 9, wherein the distal tip has an outer circumference in the shape of a polygon or other uneven shape other than a circle.

15. **(New)** The distal tip for the positioning of artificial joint stem according to claim 10, wherein the distal tip has an outer circumference in the shape of a polygon or other uneven shape other than a circle.

16. **(New)** The distal tip for the positioning of artificial joint stem according to claim 11, wherein the distal tip has an outer circumference in the shape of a polygon or other uneven shape other than a circle.

17. **(New)** The distal tip for the positioning of artificial joint stem according to claim 12, wherein the distal tip has an outer circumference in the shape of a polygon or other uneven shape other than a circle.

18. **(New)** The distal tip for positioning an artificial joint stem according to claim 8, wherein the stem comprises a plurality of mounting holes disposed in spaced relation along its circumference near the distal end thereof, and wherein the distal tip comprises a plurality of pins inserted into the mounting holes.

19. **(New)** The distal tip for the positioning of artificial joint stem according to claim 18, wherein the distal tips have different lengths so that projecting length of the distal tip is different along the circumference when a plurality of distal tips are mounted at appropriate intervals along the circumference of the stem of the artificial joint near the distal end thereof.